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The WASHINGTON DAILY News

A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER

"Give light and the people will find their own way."

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1963

1013 13th ST. N.W. (Zone 5)

DL 7-7777

In Metropolitan Washington: By Carrier, 30 per week; \$1.00 per month. By Mail: 3 months, \$2.90; 6 months, \$5.80; per year, \$11.60. Foreign Mail: 3 months, \$24 a year.
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What's With Cuba?

IF the American people feel uneasy about Cuba, perhaps it can be blamed on the different ways in which officials here talk about Soviet arms in that off-shore island.

The Kennedy Administration tends to play down any danger from a "buildup" of Soviet arms. But senators, apparently judging the same set of facts, show alarm.

At his last press conference, the President said there had not been a military buildup "in the sense of equipment coming in from outside Cuba." But at the same time he said a Soviet ship arriving since October "possibly" was loaded with military cargo.

This week the Pentagon said two more ships arrived, but there was no evidence they carried "offensive" weapons. (What did they carry?)

Defense Secretary McNamara now says the Russian missiles which led to the late-October crisis began arriving in Cuba in mid-September. But until late October this was denied by the Administration.

Sen. Keating, whose early alarms about the Soviet buildup in Cuba first

were denied but later confirmed, says a large Soviet ship arrived recently with a "cargo of armament." After briefings by Secretary of State Rusk and John A. McCone, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Sen. Aiken reported "an enormously powerful military and political base in Cuba." And Sen. Symington said there is "a big military complex in Cuba."

So Sen. Stennis of the Senate Preparedness subcommittee is planning an inquiry to "get all the facts." Such an inquiry is needed.

The Administration's continuing emphasis on the alleged lack of "offensive" weapons in Cuba is not entirely satisfactory. As Sen. Keating says, "most defense weapons also can be used for offense."

So we shall expect the Stennis committee not only to "get all the facts," as it proposes, but to report its findings publicly in terms easily understood by the non-diplomatic, non-technical mind. No colored words, no half-statements, no mysterious generalities. Let's have it straight.